

## Editorial policy: accuracy and truth

A few days ago The Battalion received a letter commenting on a recent editorial about the end of the boycott of the Nestle Co. Its author claimed the editorial's writer hid behind the anonymity of "The Battalion Editorial Board" because of his reluctance to accept criticism of his opinions.

It's time to clear up a few misconceptions. The Battalion Editorial Board is made up of six department heads over The Battalion staff. To refute the allegations that we are hiding, the Board members are: Rebeca Zimmermann, editor; John Wagner, managing editor; Patrice Koranek, city editor; Tracey Taylor, news editor; Donn Friedman, sports editor; and Kathy Wiesepape, editorial page editor. All six of us stand behind the Board's editorials.

The Board members meet each day to discuss news that will appear in The Battalion and issues that merit editorial comment. Although individual Board members write the editorials, they express the opinion of the majority of the Editorial Board. At least four members of the board must read the editorials before they go to press. If the majority doesn't agree with the opinion expressed, the editorial isn't printed.

While the editorials don't necessarily express the individual opinions of every person on the staff, they are the official stance of the newspaper.

Another common misconception concerns our policy on letters to the editor.

Letters to the editor are just that: to the editor. And we assure you that both the editor and the editorial page editor read every single one. We appreciate the issues and viewpoints that are brought to our attention, and we also appreciate constructive criticism of The Battalion, its articles and editorials. But we ask that you please sign your real name (this is directed at the author of the letter from God we received last week). If you aren't willing to stand behind your opinion, it's probably not worth printing.

We regret to say that we can't print all of the letters we receive. We've had numerous complaints from disappointed readers in the past couple of weeks because their letters didn't run, or didn't run when they wanted them to.

Since time and space dictate the number of letters we're able to print, the best we can do is strive to present an accurate sample of the opinions we receive. Although we've been accused of being biased toward one side or the other in the number of letters we run, we try to be fair.

In the editorials we express the Editorial Board's views; in the rest of The Battalion we attempt to be as objective as possible.

— The Battalion Editorial Board



## Republicans get more laughs than Democratic candidates

By ART BUCHWALD

Columnist for The Los Angeles Times Syndicate

I have been accused by some readers of always picking on President Reagan. "Why," the writers ask, "don't you make fun of the Democrats?"

It's a fair question. The answer is that so far the only thing funny about the Democrats is that there is nothing funny about them.

Let me give you a humor test. I'm going to name the Democratic candidates and you see if you laugh. All right, now — no cheating.

Mondale, Glenn, Jackson, Hart, Hollings, Cranston, McGovern, Askew and Dark Horse Candidate.

Now you probably laughed at the dark horse candidate more than you laughed at the others. So you can see the bind I'm in.

Mondale is the front runner according to the polls. There is nothing funny there. I know because I have a mole in the Mondale camp and last Monday morning I called and said, "Did Mondale do anything funny last week like cry in New Hampshire or something?"

"Nope. He just went around making speeches about the greatness of America and how Reagan doesn't care about the poor or the elderly or the disadvantaged and the unemployed."

Then I checked in with Glenn Headquarters. "Any laughs over at your place?"

While I deplore excesses, I deplore even more spineless excuse-making to justify hasty, ill-conceived decisions. It is obvious Burton and The Battalion Editorial Board gave these matters great thought.

The solution is simple, eliminate the excesses and ignore the publicity. The upperclassmen are the administrators and it is their responsibility to end the excesses. So, Burton, put the responsibility where it belongs and put an end to this hollow crusade. The Corps isn't broken, so why fix it?

Keith R. Hairell  
Class of '76

by Jim Earle

## ...and more letters

### Nestle boycott: Another view

Editor:

In regard to the letter by Leonard J. Hobbs, Jr., I wish to comment not merely as a bystander, but as a former Peace Corps volunteer.

I did participate in the Nestle boycott, and I also saw the results of Nestle's aggressive advertisement campaign in the Yeman Arab Republic.

First of all Mr. Hobbs, powdered milk does not automatically lift a group of people out of the "mire of poverty and ignorance." In fact, a mother's milk contains antibodies which help an infant to fight off disease. Powdered milk should only be used in the rare cases in which a mother cannot produce enough milk for her child.

The father of a little girl once told me that he wanted the best for his daughter and that's why he was bottle feeding her. He was bottle feeding her, Mr. Hobbs, because all of the ads said it was healthier. That girl had diarrhea, her ribs were sticking out and her forehead had a depression in it. Her eyes were glazed and unattentive. She almost died.

Yes, Mr. Hobbs, Nestle did make money in the Third World, but it's pretty hard to justify that kind of profit.

Encarnacion Perez, Jr.  
Former Peace Corps Volunteer  
Yeman 79-81

### Use of land dangerous

Editor:

I would like to comment upon the use of unused land near residential and apartment complexes.

"Glenn changed campaign managers again and bombed out in the South talking about the greatness of America and how Reagan doesn't care about the elderly or the disadvantaged and the poor."

I then talked to my mole in Jesse Jackson's office.

"You guys having any chuckles over there?"

"I don't know if this is funny or not but Jesse just gave a speech last night at a church talking about the greatness of America and how Reagan has short-changed the elderly, the disadvantaged and the poor."

"It's not a thigh slapper," I told him.

I won't go through the rest of the candidates because the reports were all similar except for the call I made to McGovern's headquarters. McGovern answered the phone himself.

"Hi, this is George McGovern. I'm out on the campaign trail for a few hours and can't answer the phone. At the sound of the beep please leave your name and telephone number, and if you're thinking of voting for me I'll get back to you as soon as I can."

I'm not copping a plea because a columnist should be able to find humor in a political party, even if there isn't any. But it's always easier to make fun of someone in power than it is someone who has none.

I had to explain this to one of Mon-

dale's staff the other day who said, "All you ever talk about in your columns is Reagan. We should have equal time."

"I'm willing to give you equal time — just tell me something Mondale's done that is really funny."

"He attacked the Reagan deficit the other day in Seattle."

"That wasn't half as funny as Reagan suggesting that Congress appoint a bipartisan commission to study how to reduce the deficit without cutting back on defense or raising taxes."

"How about the shouting match Mondale had with Glenn in the New Hampshire debate?"

"It had possibilities, but it was nothing compared to Ed Meese being appointed attorney General and all the conservatives are now upset that Reagan will have nobody left in the White House to advise him but left-wingers and pragmatists."

"Why don't you admit it? You want Reagan in the White House because he's funnier than we are."

"I have to make a living." "Well, just wait until after the elections. You'll be laughing out of the other side of your mouth. Democrats are always funnier than Republicans once they get into the Oval Office."

"Isn't everyone?"

dirt and tree clippings I could not see or be seen from the parking lot 100 feet away.

In this case, I guess, we heard just another scream-in-the-night. Having such a breeding ground for pests of all types so close to major apartment complexes shows the poor attitude of the various apartment management concerns and the City of College Station for the health and security of its residents.

Harvey Bordett  
Grad Student

## The Battalion

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### Editorial Policy

The Battalion is a non-profit, self-supporting newspaper operated as a community service to Texas A&M and Bryan-College Station. Opinions expressed in The Battalion are those of the Editorial Board or the author, and do not necessarily represent the opinions of Texas A&M administrators, faculty or the Board of Regents.

The Battalion also serves as a laboratory newspaper for students in reporting, editing and photography classes within the Department of Communications.

### Letters Policy

Letters to the Editor should not exceed 300 words in length. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit letters for style and length but will make every effort to maintain the author's intent. Each letter must be signed and must include the address and telephone number of the writer.

Reader's Forum columns and guest editorials also are welcome. Address all inquiries to the editorial page editor.

The Battalion is published Monday through Friday during Texas A&M regular semesters, except for holiday and examination periods. Mail subscriptions are \$16.75 per semester, \$33.25 per school year and \$35 per full year. Advertising rates furnished on request.

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## Letters... Don't 'fix' the Corps

I recently read, with great dismay, the new regulations issued by Col. Burton. It is obvious he has never heard the adage, "If it isn't broken, don't fix it."

It seems that every year some new crusader is out to "improve" the Corps.

But what irritated me more than this new crusade were the lame excuses presented by both the commander's officer and The Battalion Editorial Board to defend the new regulations.

While I agree the taps on combat boots were useless, the boots provide ankle support and help build leg muscles by acting as weights. The hazard is always there, be it boots, tennis shoes, or bare feet, especially for people who still haven't learn to walk as yet. As for what the services do now, who cares.

The issue of quadding was really thought out thoroughly. The idea that a fish loses respect for an upperclassman because he quads him is absolutely ridiculous.

Respect is earned or lost by the personalities involved, not because you dump a trash can of water on someone. I know. I was quadded myself, but I never lost the respect of the fish nor did I not respect them.

As for quadding seniors daily, that is an excess and it is the excesses which must be eliminated. To that I agree. The same is true of fish details.

Burton's excuse that they may be de-

grading or physically painful sounds like he's concentrating only on the excesses. It's always easier to eliminate something than to administer it properly.

As for bad publicity - give me a break. Bad publicity lurks around every corner, not only for the Corps but for Texas A&M. Anyone can find something wrong if they look hard enough.

Lastly concerning fish bites, the excuse that fish are starving to death as a result is ludicrous. The "tormenting" of fish by upperclassmen's questions is an excess which can be reduced or eliminated. However, like everything, it has its subtle purpose: to teach fish how to eat without being pigs and to be able to speak when spoken to without splattering people with food.

While I deplore excesses, I deplore even more spineless excuse-making to justify hasty, ill-conceived decisions. It is obvious Burton and The Battalion Editorial Board gave these matters great thought.

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Keith R. Hairell  
Class of '76

by Jim Earle



"Frankly, we're getting sorta tired of your antigravity experiments."